

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 01349 280742Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----280749Z 005194 /20

R 252004Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3459
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1349

EXDIS

DEPT ALSO PASS USCINCEUR FOR POLAD AND SECDEF

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE
SUBJECT: WHO MURDERED JUNBLATT?

REF: DAMASCUS 1964

1. FOR LACK OF ANY RELIABLE EVIDENCE ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, WE HAVE NOT ENTERED INTO SPECULATION AS TO WHO MURDERED JUNBLATT. WE INCLINED TO DOUBT SYRIANS DID IT (ALTHOUGH THAT IS BY ALL ODDS THE MOST POPULAR LOCAL HYPOTHESIS) BECAUSE WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT IN SYRIAN INTEREST TO DESTABILIZE SITUATION HERE.

WHOEVER DID IT MUST HAVE KNOWN THAT IT WOULD CAUSE DRAMATIC INCREASE IN TENSION, DEATH OF MANY INNOCENT PEOPLE, AND CALLS FOR AUGMENTATION OF ARAB SECURITY FORCES. ON OTHER HAND, WITH RAYMOND EDDE
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IN PARIS, JUNBLATT WAS CERTAINLY LEADING OPPONENT OF SYRIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN LEBANON, AND HIS OPPOSITION COULD NOT HAVE BEEN PLEASING TO SYRIAN LEADERS.

2. WE UNDERSTAND WALID JUNBLATT THINKS CHAMOUN DID IT, AND IS OUT TO GET HIM. CHAMOUN'S RATIONALE

PRESUMABLY WAS THAT TENSION WOULD INCREASE
MOMENTUM TOWARDS PARTITION. ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE,
BUT THIS TOO SEEMS FAR-FETCHED.

3. OTHER LOCALLY MENTIONED POSSIBILITIES INCLUDE
IRAQIS, LIBYANS, PALESTINIANS, ISRAELIS, CIA OR ANY OF A
MULTITUDE OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE SWORN BLOOD VENGEANCE
AGAINST JUNBLATT, INCLUDING DRUZE. I INCLINE TO THIS
LAST HYPOTHESIS (DRUZE VENGEANCE) BUT CAN FIND NO
ONE TO AGREE WITH ME.

4. SEVERAL POINTS WORTH NOTING:

A. WHOEVER DID IT WAS INFORMED OF JUNBLATT'S
MOVEMENTS IN ADVANCE. INFO COULD HAVE COME VIA
TELEPHONE MONITORING (WHICH IS WIDESPREAD AND
RESULTS OF WHICH AVAILABLE TO SYRIANS, CHAMOUNISTS
AND PALESTINIANS). FACT THAT HE COMING ALONG THAT
PARTICULAR SECONDARY ROAD AT THAT TIME, HOWEVER,
LIKELY TO HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO RELATIVELY FEW PEOPLE,
AND IMPLICATION IS THAT SOMEONE WITHIN JUNBLATT'S
HOUSEHOLD OR ENTOURAGE INVOLVED. THIS WOULD SUPPORT
THESIS OF DRUZE VENGEANCE, BUT WOULD NOT EXCLUDE
OTHER THESES, SINCE TRAITORS IN GOOD SUPPLY HERE.

B. ASSASSINS PROBABLY HAD COOPERATION OF
SOMEONE IN LOCALITY OF BAAKLINE, WHICH IS DRUZE
VILLAGE. THEIR CAR WAS SEEN IN BAAKLINE BEFORE THE
CRIME, AND IT WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO
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MOUNT AN AMBUSH WITHOUT BEING SEEN BY SOMEONE FROM
VILLAGE. OF ALL THE NON-DRUZE FACTIONS MENTIONED,
CHAMOUNISTS PERHAPS IN BEST POSITION TO COOPT DRUZE
IN SHUF.

C. JUNBLATT HAD GREAT MANY ENEMIES, AMONG
DRUZE AS WELL AS ELSEWHERE. HIS COUSIN, WIFE OF
EMIR MAJID ARSLAN, LEADER OF YAZBEKI OR ANTI-JUNBLATT
DRUZE, CLAIMS SHE WENT TO KAMAL SIZ WEEKS AGO AND GOT
PROMISE OF CHECK FOR \$50,000 AS CONTRIBUTION TO
ORPHANAGE FOR DRUZE CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS KILLED
IN RECENT FIGHTING. EMIR MAJID COMMENTED ON THIS
TO ME, "HE SHOULD CONTRIBUTE. MOST OF THE ORPHANS
ARE HIS WORK."

5. IDENTITY OF ASSASSINS MAY NEVER BE KNOWN. IN A
SENSE IT IS IRRELEVANT. WHAT IS IMPORTANT NOW IS WHO
DRUZE DECIDE WAS RESPONSIBLE. IF THEY HAVE PICKED
CHAMOUN, HIS ACTUARIAL ODDS HAVE CHANGED STARKLY
FOR THE WORSE.

PARKER

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